MY TRIP TO THE SUEZ CANAL &C

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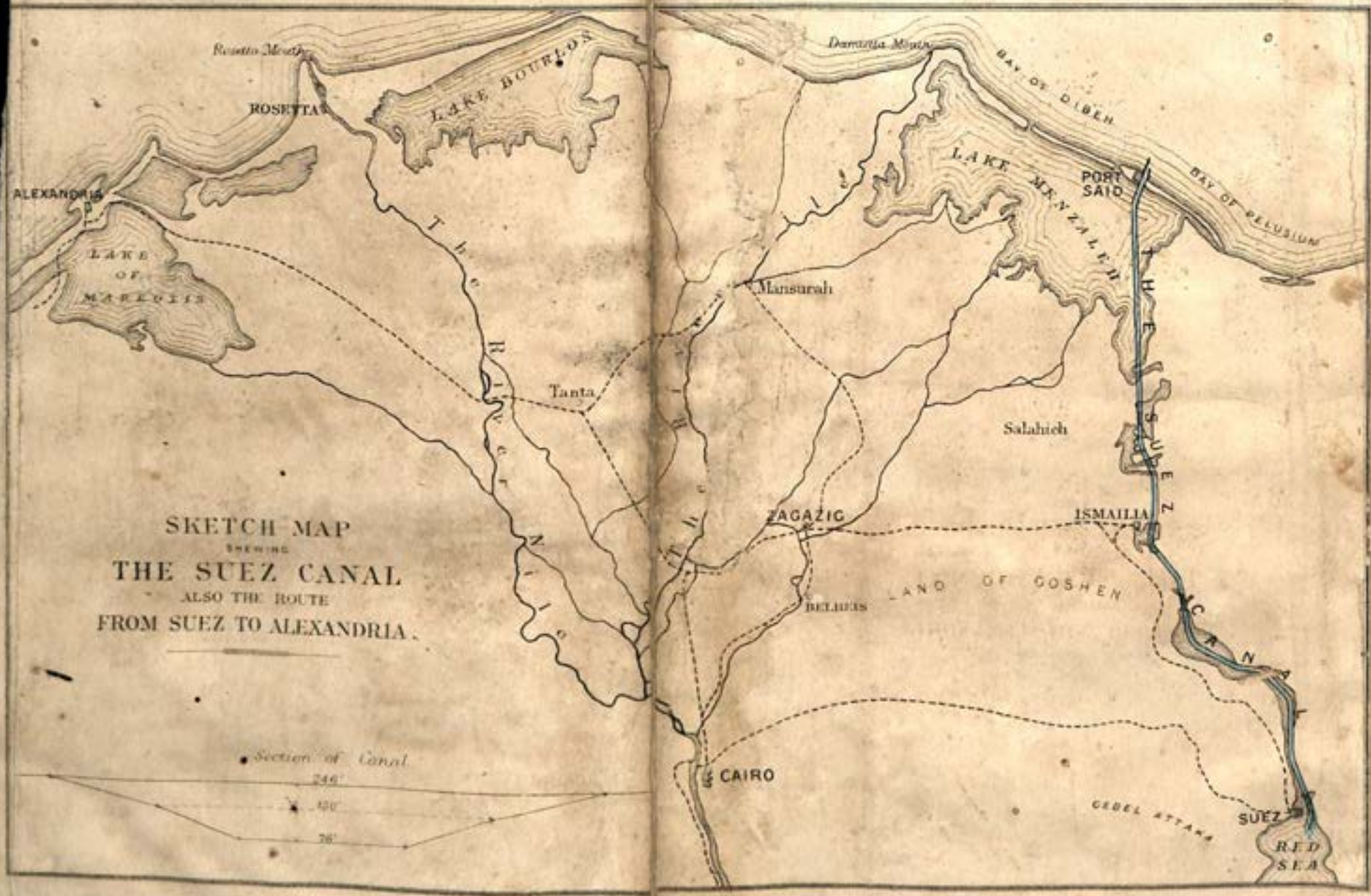

Hamilton, Adams & Co. London

MY TRIP

TO

THE SUEZ CANAL

AND

BACK TO LONDON

LONDON
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., 32 PATERNOSTER ROW
1870

00058721

Hôtel de Lille et d'Albion, Paris,
November 7, 1869.

My dear ——,

You are aware the whole world has been attracted lately by newspaper announcements of a great event to come off in Egypt in a few days, and that I have been induced to pack up my carpet-bag and go myself to see this additional wonder of the world, the number of which, now-a-days, including new-born infants, beggars all calculation. We were a good deal shaken up during the night and yesterday from having to rail it for nearly twenty consecutive hours; but the time was rather amusingly passed, my fellow-passengers in the carriage being a Spaniard, who raved violently against Prim, giving some peculiar opinions of him and Serrano, both of whom he pronounced to be 'hombres pêrfidos,' and a Frenchman, a *marchand de nouveautés*, who attributed his want of success in business entirely to the existing *régime* in France, and was quite provoked at the idea of any other ruler, whether emperor, king, or kaiser, being so impracticable as he who now occupies the Imperial throne. 'Ah!' said he, '*vous autres*, you may have all you say, but *franchement*, I can tell you, *nous avons notre coquin chez nous.*' It seemed to me a most disrespectful way of speaking of his own particular sovereign. A third was a cross between a German, a Frenchman, and a Yankee, who explained how he managed matters between their respective countries, which he was in the habit of visiting for purposes of trade, and gave us a practical illustration of it on the spot, as we approached the *gare* at ——. All at once he filled his hat, his inner and outer pockets with cigars, uttering dreadful maledictions against Douanes and all Custom-house

officials. 'Dey are dam rascal—I gives dem no troubles—I shaves de dooty.' Then he went on in a little diatribe against kings, princes, and dukes, who, he assured us, would, if they could, levy a tax on the light of the moon, as was done in England on that of the sun, until the Duke of Wellington put a stop to it!

At length we reached this brilliant city about eight o'clock in the morning, and here, I am, after a most refreshing bath, a comfortable sleep, and first-chop cup of coffee, snugly established in this nice clean hotel, at which we have often stopped together. The carpet and the curtains of my room are fresh, with writing-table and a most inviting fauteuil, and an *armoire à glace*, in which a lady might contemplate to advantage the arrangement of a curl or the sweep of a crinoline! There is a wood fire in the hearth; it crackles and sparkles so cheerfully, and while all is thus inviting within, the sun shines gloriously without.

What comfortable things are those 'feet-warmers,' with which railroad carriages on the Continent are supplied. How many colds and coughs they must prevent!

November 8.

I was taken care of last evening by our old friends the ——, who, as an Englishman would say, 'had me up to dinner,' and with whom I passed a couple of hours very agreeably, besides being furnished by —— with a letter of introduction to M. de Lesseps. To-day I have been engaged in making a few preparations for the trip, and adding to my supply of impedimenta some real or fancied wants. The whole city is placarded with advertisements of where one can be furnished with calico-covered umbrellas, tents, puggrees, and imaginary *nécessaires* of all sorts, indispensable for the journey to the Canal Maritime de l'Isthme de Suez! At the corner of the boulevard des Capucines and the rue de la Paix, notices covering forty feet square of the front of an unfinished building tell you by how many different routes you can travel to Egypt, and of the *agrémens* of each. You can go *viâ* Marseille, or by the way of Brindisi, or you may even take a

look at Vienna and Venice on the road; and then follows the *prix de voyage*, well defined down to centimes, and whether *nourriture* is or is not *comprise!*

Grand Hôtel du Louvre, Marseille,
November 9.

It is a long, fatiguing journey from Paris here. We left that city in the evening about half-past seven; and, owing to a delay of a couple of hours; to arrange the traditional 'screw,' did not arrive at the hotel until 2 P.M. to-day. I found myself, not to my regret, in a smoking compartment, and as night wore on, through clouds of smoke, the forms of seven fellow-travellers became somewhat indistinct. One was also Egypt bound, by the steamer *Nil*, and he spoke favourably of the *Godavery*, belonging to the same line—the Messageries Impériales—on which I had booked a passage. These Frenchmen were all most lively fellows. They related their experiences in various parts of the world, all having been great travellers, and each contributed to while away the 'long, long dreary night.' One had served as a colonel of horse in the Confederate army during our civil war, and had been led quite a dance in several engagements, pursuits, and retreats, which he described in the most amusing and characteristic way, altogether in a military point of view, of course, and without a particle of feeling. He paid a high tribute of praise both to the Southern and Northern armies for the great proficiency at which they had arrived in all branches of the art of war at the close of hostilities. Another was a naval officer on his way to join his ship at Toulon; he had visited Japan and various ports on the coast of China, of which he told us some fearfully hard stories. He was under the impression that French influence was becoming paramount in Japan, and instanced, that going into an hotel one day at Yokohama, a native servant immediately addressed him as 'Mossoo,' asked him the time of day, and whether he would have Bordeaux or a *petit verre*—'Noos avons de toos, mossoo!' This amused the other travellers very much, one of whom exclaimed, 'Tiens,

quelles braves gens!' 'Isn't there,' I asked, 'a place called Hongkong somewhere about those *parages*?' 'Oh yes,' he replied, 'Honk-konk; je le connais bien—un vilain trou avec beaucoup de pirates—colonie anglaise!'

At length at that vast caravanserai, the Grand Hôtel du Louvre et de la Paix, the haven long looked forward to and much desired by the weary traveller from the Far East, whose appetite has been sorely tried by forty days of stereotyped meals on board of a P. and O., and who bears a vivid recollection of the perpetually recurring unaccountable curries, the eternal raspberry jam, the abominable mixture which goes under the name of coffee or tea, and which must be tasted to be appreciated. The *cuisine* of the hotel is excellent—the bread, butter, and eggs, No. 1. You can get what you like and as you like it; the *service* is civil and obliging, and when you come to pay, for what the Spaniards call 'el ruido en casa'—'the bobbery made in the house'—that is to say, the *reckoning*—you will find it of a good size! on the principle of the Spanish proverb, perhaps, 'The fairer the hostess the fouler the bill.'

On board the *Godavery*,
November 12.

I took passage on this steamer from having been informed at the office of agency in Paris, when securing my ticket, that she would go straight to Port Said and Suez, thus giving one a comfortable opportunity to see the Canal in all its length and breadth. Nothing more apropos could be desired; and so I found myself on board early in the morning of the 10th, and at nine o'clock we left the harbour of Marseille. On looking about, we numbered sixty-one cabin passengers, amongst whom are eight or ten for Madras or Calcutta, which is the ultimate destination of the steamer. The others are bent on pleasure and sight-seeing, or delegates from various continental countries to represent commercial bodies at the great gathering of the nations on the occasion of the fêtes of the inauguration, which are to come off on the 16th, 17th, and following days of this month. The cabins are clean,

well attended to, and of good size; each has a large port, serving abundantly for light and ventilation. It does a hungry man good, or him who is not afflicted with sea-sickness, to hear the summons to the dinner-table, which on board the *Godavery* is not by the sound of the 'rattling drum and spirit-stirring fife,' which serve as a decoy on some steamers where I have been a passenger.

As usual, when an engine has been *thoroughly overhauled and pronounced fit for anything*, as they assured me was the case with that of the *Godavery*, we had not been at sea a dozen hours when we were surprised at the steamer coming to a full stop! The familiar hammering and tinkering were heard below, then, after an hour or two, a convulsive working of the machine; presently the screw took a turn, then hesitated; off went a puff of steam, again the engine moved and more steadily, the screw renewed its revolutions, the steam was shut down, as if all were merely exchanging a passing compliment, and finally away we went, everything correct and satisfactory. It proved however a delusion, but was well kept up during the night; and when I went on deck in the morning we were making the best of our way for an anchorage in the Straits of Bonifacio, 'pour faire des réparations.' We sighted the town of La Maddalena and the residence of Garibaldi on the island opposite—Caprera—at which most of the passengers gazed with much interest, particularly a fat abbé, who spoke slightingly of the general who had had the temerity to attack the Saint Siége, and shook his head ominously. The 'loose screw' on this occasion turned out to be of a much more serious nature than we could have supposed, and for fourteen hours we remained at anchor; however, we passed the time pleasantly enough, only somewhat concerned as to when, with this delay, we should reach Port Said. We went through the usual course of talking and smoking, walking the deck and reading, and with a capital table under our lee didn't mind it much. At length we hove up about eight o'clock in the evening, and are now running for the harbour of Messina, where I shall post this.

November 13.

We are once more under steam, having passed four hours at Messina, which gave some of us an opportunity to be done in the way of coral beads and brooches, or in ornaments of lava, and others to land and wander about the town; solidly and substantially built, with well-paved streets, abounding in all the modern contrivances of telegraph offices, from which may be despatched messages to any part of the civilised world, and connected with Catania, as it will soon be also with Syracuse, by rail. The city is beautifully situated on the bay, and principally abreast of the harbour, which is protected by a circular mole of great extent, into which the entrance is only from the north by a very narrow passage. It must be the ancient port for galleys, added to and improved upon in modern times. There are some fine old churches in the town and well-furnished shops; the heights beyond are most picturesque, rising in great beauty, clothed with luxuriant foliage, amongst which the olive is prominent, and crowned with fortifications, convents, or private residences, apparently of palatial order. Thank me for sparing you the everlasting reference to Scylla and Charybdis.

The weather is magnificent, and every one in the best of spirits; sea comparatively smooth, and few evidences of any of the passengers having indulged in the proverbial dry toast at breakfast, which *somehow* never did agree with them. We are of many nations, but by degrees we have come to fraternise with one another. On these occasions there is always something to be learnt which one never knew before, and as reserve wears off, a civil sort of intercourse is established, which at least serves to pass the time pleasantly when thrown amongst strangers, even if it does not lead to more enduring acquaintance.

November 16.

Had we selected our weather, we could not have made a better choice; it is *cold*, if that is a drawback, but otherwise, the sky, the sea, the moonlight nights are simply sublime. The *Godavery* turns out to be an excellent sea-boat, and

comfortable in every respect. No one bothers the passengers on the quarter-deck; no lynx-eyed officer nor quartermaster goes prowling about to 'put out your pipe,' and so far as the captain and officers are concerned, the duties of the vessel, her navigation, her progress, are managed, as it were, by an invisible agency, for they make no sign. It is clear, though, we shall not be at Port Said for the initial ceremony, that of declaring the Canal open, and which will not be by beat of drum and sound of trumpet, but by religious offices, to take place this evening.

Port Said, November 17.

We anchored here about three o'clock this morning. Luckily for you, we approached the shores of Egypt during the night, and thus no chance of bringing into this letter that certain monument called Pompey's Pillar, nor 'the long low coast' with which travellers christen their *début* in the land of the Pharaohs.

In sailing for Port Said from the west, having passed the Damietta branch of the Nile, you, as it were, turn sharp around the corner towards the south-east, and advancing within a short distance of the land, soon come upon a long jetty constructed of huge blocks of stone, and running out north-easterly for a distance of 2,730 yards. This jetty or barrier, with one opposed to it further to the east, has been made for the purpose of forming an artificial harbour, and to check the drift of mud held in solution by the waters flowing from the above-mentioned mouth of the Nile, which have generally an easterly current. It has a breadth of about twelve feet, with an average height of seven or eight, and is formed in great measure of square blocks, consisting of a composite of lime and sand, as durable and solid as stone (prepared in works erected at the present town of Port Said, in 1864), and finished in 1868 at a cost of 480,000*l.* sterling. These blocks are laid irregularly, although as closely as their angular shape permits. It is perhaps to be regretted that they were not placed with more precision, but the opinion exists, that whatever mud or deposit comes in

contact with them, will, in process of time, solidify and form an impenetrable barrier; in which case, there is nothing left to be desired, and I imagine no difficulty will ensue on this score. To the east, at a distance of four-and-a-half miles along the shore, another jetty stretches out, in a direction almost due north, in length 2,070 yards; thus, as will be seen, with the first and the line of coast is formed a sort of triangle, with its apex cut off, leaving a space of two-and-a-half miles in width for an entrance. At the seaward extremity of each jetty is placed a light. Within these limits is formed the *outer harbour*, affording anchorage for scores of vessels, with a depth of thirty feet of water.

But what a scene presented itself as we crossed this outer harbour and steamed into the great basin, soon after daybreak. Our captain boldly ran the vessel well in, and dropped anchor within 200 yards of the Imperial yacht, the *Aigle*. We were surrounded by ships of all western nations (except one), from the two-decker, the *Thémise*, bearing the flag of a French Vice-Admiral, which was made fast to a wharf on the port side of the entrance to the basin, down to the tiniest cockboat—everything in the shape of a man-of-war, yacht, steamer, despatch-boat, and merchant vessel was there, and flags of every country were flying from them, as well as private signals. Such a bustle and confusion on all hands, except amongst those vessels which had been told off to pass through the Canal, and they were moored on either side, in regular lines, all ready for a start. We seem to have been pitched into the very midst of a gathering of all peoples and of all tongues! We soon learnt that at ten o'clock the procession of vessels was to commence, and an extraordinary degree of animation was visible around and about us. Passengers were joining their ships, crowds of small steamers loaded with people were rushing about in all directions whistling and screaming. Boats jostling one another impatient to be off, such heaps of carpet-bags, boxes, and trunks, and on them seated or lying travellers of all colours and in every possible garb. The decks of

the vessels themselves were in most cases covered with human beings, from the bows to the bridge and paddle-boxes, and so to the taffrail, all alive with green goggles, puggrees, and umbrellas.

At length off they started, the *Aigle en avant!* When one considers the magnitude of the enterprise to celebrate the completion of which so many thousands of people are here collected, including crowned heads and princes, what a charm is added to the scene, by the presence of the Empress of the French, as leader on the occasion.

> 'The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne
> 'Burnt on the water.'

But Cleopatra's famous voyage scarcely furnished so fair a page in history. A noble fleet representing the various nations of the world (with one exception), and all in holiday dress, guided by the Imperial 'Bee' which floats from Her Majesty's yacht, has in it something significant as well as romantic. Peace and industry, as it were, opening the highway, which, while sundering the two principal continents of the globe, unite the waters of the Western world with those of the storied East.

As the day advanced, however, the prospect for ourselves became less exhilarating, and towards evening we were seriously debating how *we* were to get through the Canal. The *Godavery* had to discharge a quantity of cargo, that she might be lightened to a suitable draught. Meanwhile, perhaps fifty vessels of all kinds had left for Suez and Ismailia. Yet there remained a goodly number still to go, on board of some one of which we did not altogether despair of getting a lift, but these were constantly leaving as well; and at length two of our party volunteered to go on a drumming expedition, to see how the land lay, and ascertain the chances of securing passage for us. We had been told by a gentleman of the Messageries Impériales, who came on board the *Godavery* soon after she anchored, that should she be unable to leave for Suez in the course of the day, the passengers would be provided with conveyances for Ismailia and the fêtes there, and subsequently

on to Suez, by His Excellency the Khédive, at which we cheered tremendously; but towards the close of the day, as the conveyances did not make their appearance, it was judged safer not to rely entirely upon them.

Our *deputation* went on board a large Turkish transport, and the *Italia*, a vessel of the Societa Anonyma, and were at once told that we should be most welcome—we numbered six in our particular party—that we must take our chance to sleep on a topsail-halyard block, on the ship's taffrail, on top of the boilers, or partly inboard and partly overboard, wherever we could catch it, unless we could do without sleep altogether, as they were crowded to excess with passengers already; but as far as chow-chow was concerned, everything was entirely at our disposal. This looked encouraging enough, but on the return of our delegates to the *Godavery*, it occurred to them that they would try the P. and O. *Delta*, which was lying in solitary majesty not far from us, but with no preparation for a start that we could see. On reaching her deck, they reported that a party of six gentlemen, three of whom were English and three Americans, stood a fair chance of being 'left out in the cold,' unless they could find an opportunity for Ismailia at least; and mildly asked if they could accommodate them with passage. A sort of council of war was straightway held as to the advisability of admitting these six vagrants on board. It appears that the *Delta* had been specially appointed to convey a deputation of directors of the P. and O. Company to the inauguration of the Canal, and as they had made up their *partie*, our friends very properly considered it as intruding upon them; nevertheless, it was modestly suggested that a turn to Ismailia would be very acceptable, and there we would leave the vessel, if required to do so. It was then arranged that if the *Delta* was actually to start in the morning, of which there seemed a doubt, we could come on board, and the signal for us would be the heaving in of her anchor.

Our *deputation* has just returned—6.30 P.M.—with this most cloudy prospect. Still there are the Turkish transport

and the *Italia*, if they don't give us the slip during the night.

But before evening closes, a word of the 'Grand Bassin.' It acts as a vestibule to the *Canal proper*, is four miles in length from north-east to south-west, and half-a-mile in width. The town of Port Said, which now contains from 10,000 to 11,000 inhabitants, amongst whom is a large sprinkling of French and Levantines, mostly employed heretofore on the works, is built on its western bank, on ground recovered principally from Lake Menzaleh, and three deep square cuttings are made in the sands just beyond the town to the southward, namely, one for the accommodation of trading vessels, one for a dock where they may be repaired, and one for steamers, and adjoining this latter is the entrance to the Canal. At the junction of Port Said and the western jetty already spoken of, stands a stone, or composite *phare*, in which a magnesium light is now burning with an intense brilliancy, visible at sea for a distance of eighteen miles. The eastern side of this 'Grand Bassin' is a straight wall, about eight feet high, protected from the encroachments of the lake, across which it is thrown, by a broad solid bank. The depth of water throughout, twenty-eight to thirty feet.

Ismailia, November 19.

We left the *Godavery* yesterday morning about seven o'clock; every vessel whose present destination was Ismailia had already started, and none remained but the *Delta*, and on board of her we went, according to arrangement of the evening previous, as we found she was heaving in her anchor. Suddenly, however, this ceased, and there seemed the greatest uncertainty whether she would start, or remain where she was, or paddle back to Alexandria. At one moment she was really going on, our spirits rose; the next she was not going, down they went; and we could not have borne the strain much longer. Presently a French gentleman, also from the *Godavery*, and who had been allowed permission to link his fate with the steamer's, gave it up in despair, and went away; but the

next moment a Turkish official came alongside, and said if the steamer was going, she had better be off at once, for a telegram had just been received with orders for no more vessels to enter the Canal. This decided the question. A little more puffing and blowing (of the engine), and to our infinite delight, we were at length fairly under way, and heading for the narrow cut in the sands.

The entrance of the Canal is marked on either side by a tall obelisk of slight materials, hastily erected for the occasion, but to be replaced hereafter, I was informed, by others of a more solid construction. We steered almost due south, between banks of sand, averaging about twenty feet high, beyond which the eye ranged over the waters of Lake Menzaleh, dotted here and there with shoals, covered with prodigious quantities of pelicans, flamingoes, and sandpipers. Many have been congratulating themselves that the Canal must inevitably be choked up with sand, but it seems strange that neither this lake, across which we were steaming, nor Mareotis, nor Maadiah, nor others in the neighbourhood of less note, have been converted in the long ages during which they have existed into dry land; and the winds have not *always* been from the north. It seems to me, judging from what I have seen to-day, that this is the last thing to be apprehended with the Canal, and as to its banks being destroyed by the wash of paddles, the thing appears to me next to impossible. No palpable effect did those of the *Delta* have, that I could perceive, although she travelled at a good speed—fully 7-8 knots an hour—the best part of the way. The *channel* of the Canal is clearly marked out by tall posts; there is no mistaking it, no need of chart or compass. Along the western bank run lines of telegraphic wires, communicating between Ismailia and Port Said. We reached Kantara at noon, passing at intervals of about ten miles indications of cuttings more or less advanced, to be perfected hereafter into recesses, like sidings on a railway, where vessels may pass one another, if necessary. Here we observed a ferry across the Canal; on a board above the right bank, 'Buffet des voyageurs,' 'Hôtel de la Poste,' huts, bunga-

lows—primitive in appearance, indeed, but all decorated with flags, surmounted by those of Turkey and France. Quiet parties of Arab men, women, and children, gazing listlessly at the vessel as she passes; meditative donkeys, and patient camels standing or sprawling about amongst them on the sands—such pictures of happy families! We see on one side, made of twisted weeds or grass, in large characters, 'La Ville de Kantara,' and opposite, 'Vive l'Impératrice!' At El Ferdan the course of the Canal is nearly south-east; it then turns west of south just before reaching El Guisr, and continues in that direction until it enters Lake Timsah. We had scarcely got to El Guisr when, to our dismay, we discovered three vessels ahead of us, all stationary: the large Turkish transport, a Swedish frigate, and a Spanish gunboat, the *Pelayo*; and it was thought best to bring to, which was done by running out a couple of hawsers and making them fast to strong wooden posts, placed at short distances, one from the other, on the banks, for such a purpose.

It turned out that the first vessel had brought up at night by dropping a stream-anchor astern, and, on heaving in the chain in the morning, fouled the screw, which occasioned the detention. Whether we could get by these craft was doubtful; at all events, it was not tried, but about five in the afternoon, the *Pelayo*, a small vessel, was off and went clear. The prospect looked by no means cheerful for us; we were within twelve or fourteen miles of Ismailia, and as a ball was to come off there in the evening, given by the Viceroy, at which some of the six were desirous of being present, we were anxious to get on; however, there was nothing for it but patience, and in this frame of mind we were piped down to dinner. It was a quiet meal, congenial to one's feelings after the excitement of the day and conducted with the utmost decorum. We had made a fair beginning, and were getting on comfortably enough, when I was given to understand that a small steamer had come alongside, from the Turkish or Egyptian Admiral, for passengers from the *Godavery*, and would take them to Ismailia. A single glance at the members of the party

sufficed—we left the hospitable board with grateful thanks for all attentions; in three minutes were on the deck of the little steamer, with 'bag and baggage,' and off.

This northern section of the Canal is about forty-six miles in length, and is navigable for vessels of twenty feet draught; the least depth throughout being twenty-two and twenty-three feet.

We entered Lake Timsah about seven o'clock, and, guided by lanterns suspended from tall poles, which marked the passage, with an incomparably bright moon above, a delicious atmosphere, a fleet of vessels in sight brilliantly illuminated, the town of Ismailia itself a blaze of light, we sped on as if gliding over a fairy sea. As we approached the landing-place the scene was indescribably beautiful:—a vast display of lanterns and incessant fireworks gave to everything the brightness of day; such a moving, noisy crowd, such a variety of colours and of costumes—many but one remove from nature—such a tom-tomming and fifing! For six passengers and their luggage our yacht was rather circumscribed; but by dint of giving and taking, a little mild swearing, and a few ghastly jokes, we contrived, some outside, some inside, and some on the deck of the cabin, to open our trunks and get therefrom the wherewithal to array ourselves,—'en frac et décorations,' as the invitation to the ball exacted; and finally we started on foot and on donkeys, in the best of spirits, for the palace of the Viceroy.

A ball is a ball all the world over. This was remarkable for one particular feature—that perhaps on no occasion were met together under the same roof so many and such varied stars and garters, orders and decorations, so many representatives of so many powers. The Empress of the French was present, of course; the Emperor of Austria, too; princes and princesses were there in crowds; men and women of high degree and of low degree—a goodly number of *oi polloi*. Christians and Jews, Mussulmans and Pagans, and of each and every sect thereof. All seemed delighted, though 'squeezed and squozen,' as a stranger close by me remarked; all were as jolly as they could expect to be under the circumstances of the great

pressure, except the venerable Abd-el-Kader, and he the most grave and dignified individual that I saw in the vast gathering; and it may be imagined that not amongst the least happy of the guests were many of our fellow-passengers of the *Godavery*, for whom the boats had been sent by the order of the Khédive as at first promised, and whom we were glad to meet again; they arrived about midnight. But it was near the entrance, until towards eleven o'clock, that the mass of human beings was next to immovable, and there I found myself, in its midst, for the chance of seeing the Empress as she came in. Close by me was a stalwart French servant of the Viceroy, who, with about a dozen others of his countrymen, done up in gorgeous livery of red, endeavoured to keep the passage clear as the visitors arrived. He graciously condescended to point out to me any distinguished guest as he entered, warning me, however, that there would be nothing to see until the Empress made her appearance, of which he would give me timely notice. But as numbers passed in and were lost in the multitude, many of whom wore on their breasts medals of many hues, with ribbons and sparkling devices, I asked now and then who may that be? 'Oh,' he replied, 'ce n'est rien ça—vous allez voir tout à l'heure.' Another moved on, covered with a glittering cluster of similar favours. Now, thinks I, this must be somebody, and I said: 'Qui est ce monsieur, avec tant de décorations?' '*Nobody*, monsieur,' was the contemptuous answer, 'you will see the Empress directly;' and it became painful to hear how lightly the flunkey with regulation calves spoke of the wearers of those emblems of merit, of those rewards of hard-earned glory, or of lives devoted to some great or sacred cause! They were all nothing, forsooth! Presently in the distance was heard the French national air. 'Voila, Monsieur,' exclaimed the ecstatic man in red, 'Sa Majesté!' and out rushed the Khédive, who soon returned following the Empress, who entered leaning on the arm of the Emperor of Austria. Then, immense movement; Her Majesty, full of grace and dignity, walked through the crowded apartments, and

finally disappeared in the ball-room, where, with a short interval for supper, as a penny-a-liner would say, 'dancing was kept up with unabated spirit until Aurora,' &c. &c. For my own part, I must confess to a weakness for the attractions which the supper-table presented; and as it was long after midnight, the *menu* excellent, ditto the wines, I made a comfortable repast, and drunk to the P. & O. *Delta*, wishing her every success in her efforts to get through the Canal. Our party contrived to keep well together, and towards four in the morning we found ourselves once more on board of our saucy yacht, the '*Bismillah*,' and turned in as best we could, in rather a promiscuous way. As this is to be posted at Ismailia, I will just call your attention to the envelope for designs of the Great Pyramid, the Sphinx, Cleopatra's Needle, and Pompey's Pillar, which will delight anyone who keeps a stampographic album.

The town of Ismailia is built on the north-western border of the lake Timsah, 2½ miles distant from the south end of the northern section of the Canal. The foundation stone was laid in 1862, and it has now a population of 5,000, with its 'gardens, libraries, schools and churches, cafés and theatres, where was, but a few years ago, only a sandy waste.' The lake itself is deep in most parts, no dangers for vessels exist, and the average depth about 28 feet. The ship channel across it, is staked out as in the canal, which makes it all safe and pleasant for steamers.

Cairo, November 21.

You would be infinitely amused could I but give even an inkling of the thousand and one *contretemps*, accidents, and untoward events of which we hear, as having been added to the experience of some of those who have 'graced the occasion with their presence,' and the best of the joke is, they have all been mild in form, as if pre-ordained that every reminiscence should be unmixed with anything of a very serious nature. I must, however, tell you of one, somewhat awkward to be sure, but the victim of which, perhaps, considered nothing more than an amusing con-

tribution given inadvertently to the universal fun and hilarity surrounding him. He was one of those privileged persons classed as 'Invités,' but like numerous specimens of the same with whom we fell in, gifted with more body than brains—the *right man*, but always in the wrong place; not knowing where to go nor what to do, but remaining in expectation that he would surely be hunted up by the Khédive, dry-nursed by his Excellency throughout all the ceremonies, and generally cared for and led about to bed, board and pastime during his stay in Egypt. It never seemed to occur to him that the Viceroy had several thousand guests on his hands, nor that he himself could scarcely expect any particular viceregal coddling. Late at night he landed at Ismailia, wandered about for some hours followed by two hummals with his trunk and carpet-bags, hat-box and umbrella, and a large tin bath done up in leather. Utterly at a loss where to go, and becoming quite tired out, he came by chance upon a tent in which he observed one vacant place, the other two being already occupied by snoring men: so he took possession of it, made every preparation for a good sleep, and turned in amongst such covering as the bed possessed, having placed his impedimenta at his head, and was soon in a state of happy forgetfulness. The morning was well advanced when he awoke in a most cheerful frame of mind, refreshed like the traditional giant; he heard from without the tom-tomming, the hurdy-gurdy and the fifing, the familiar noises of the evening before, and congratulated himself that now he was fully prepared to enjoy the fun. The field was clear; he would have a quiet toilette, and go forth fit for anything—moreover the two snorers had departed; he sprang up and moved towards his clothes—they had departed too! his boxes, his carpet-bags had followed *suit*, and he himself alone in his glory in a costume next door to that of the parent of all mankind; as an aggravation, his bath and his umbrella had been generously left behind.

I wrote you that I had been furnished by friend —— in Paris with a letter of introduction to M. de Lesseps. Fancy how completely every social law and conventionality

were set at nought, when I tell you that I went to present it at Ismailia at seven in the morning, three hours after quitting the ball-room, and I was not considered as having just escaped from a lunatic asylum, nor even charged with being out of my mind!

I had scarcely rung the bell and handed the letter and my card to a servant, than he reappeared and I was requested to walk in. I found myself in the presence of the gentleman with whose name the whole world has become familiar, and he in dressing-gown and slippers. The room was quite small, a camp bedstead in one corner, in another a table covered with papers, which, with a bookcase and a couple of chairs, comprised the furniture—everything was simplicity itself, with an air of neatness and order. I began to apologise at the unseasonable moment of my visit, but he checked me at once, and gave me a most cordial reception. Our mutual friend was the principal subject of conversation, and he expressed much regret at his absence from the inauguration. As I knew that every moment of his time was taken up with the important event then progressing, I made my call as short as possible, and on leaving he placed in my hand an interesting record of facts connected with the Canal, and very kindly sent a person with me to M. Guichard, the agent of transportation, under whose guidance or direction as to my future movements I was simply to place myself.

M. de Lesseps is a gentleman of quiet and agreeable manner, which gives but little outward token of the bold and untiring energy which has brought to a successful issue one of the most wonderful enterprises of modern days. His disinterestedness in the pursuit of this object, to which he has devoted so many years of his life, is not less conspicuous than his unfailing self-reliance and fertility of resource. In reviewing the persistent opposition he has met with, notably from England, it is marvellous how his genius and resolution have risen superior to all efforts made to thwart him. Nothing is more surprising than the attitude taken by Great Britain, and with some exceptions, the English press, in regard to converting a

sandy useless waste into a safe navigable channel for vessels of all nations. Nothing does M. de Lesseps more honour, and through him his native country—both now immortalised by this event—than his untiring zeal in convincing these enemies, not only of the practicability of the scheme, but of the solid advantages it would yield to them. Hear what he wrote to Mr. Richard Cobden, from Cairo, December 3, 1854:—*

'Tout ce qui a pour résultat de contribuer à l'extension du commerce, de l'industrie et de la navigation du monde, est surtout avantageux à l'Angleterre, puissance qui l'emporte sur toutes les autres par l'importance de sa marine, de sa production manufacturière et de ses relations commerciales. L'Angleterre, aussi bien et plus encore que la France, doit vouloir le percement de cette langue de terre de trente lieues, que tout homme préoccupé des questions de civilisation et de progrès ne peut voir sur la carte sans éprouver un violent désir de faire disparaître le seul obstacle jeté sur la grande route du commerce du monde. L'Angleterre ne s'opposera pas au projet, elle qui fait plus de la moitié du commerce général avec les Indes et la Chine, qui possède en Asie un immense empire, et qui, par le percement de l'isthme, verra reduire d'un tiers le frais de sa navigation.'

'Everything that has for its object the extension of commerce, of industry, and navigation is, above all, advantageous to England, a power which surpasses all others in the importance of its shipping, its manufactured productions, and its business relations. England as much as, and even more than, France should favour the piercing of that strip of land, of but thirty leagues in length, which all men preoccupied with questions of civilization and progress cannot behold on the map without a strong desire to see it removed—this sole obstacle thrown across a great route for the commerce of the world. England will not oppose the project—a country which carries on the greatest share of the general traffic with India and China, which

* Quoting a letter that he had already written to Mr. Bruce, H. B. M.'s Consul-General, Alexandria.

possesses an immense empire in Asia, and which by the cutting of the isthmus will see the expenses of navigation reduced by one-third.'

It would take more time than I can now spare to go over all the story; but whether at Constantinople, Alexandria, or in London, the same hostile policy was carried out by England, led by Lord Palmerston. M. de Lesseps himself visited nearly every continental court, submitted the scheme he had in view, which was received with approbation. He also met with much sympathy from the Chambers of Commerce of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Hull, Belfast, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Newcastle. Of all people the English were certainly to be the greatest gainers by the opening of the Canal. Could they be indifferent to a route which shortened their road to the markets of the East by 5,000 to 7,000 miles? Yet, listen to the words of the British Ambassador at Constantinople to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, 1855:—

'All things that can disturb the friendship of the two countries (France and England) must be removed. The piercing of the Isthmus of Suez is one of this character: its commercial object is simply a pretext, while the project is in itself an *impossibility*. Even if admitting its possibility, the revenue will never meet its expenses. Under the enterprise is concealed a political design.'

There is a quiet irony in the reply of M. Walewski:—'The piercing of the Isthmus of Suez is a special enterprise, made in virtue of a concession, and Government has not the right to put any obstacle in its way. If the enterprise is *impossible, it will not be realised*; if only possible under disastrous conditions, then it will not be carried out, as capitalists will refuse to be associated in it; but in either one case or the other, there is nothing that need give the slightest uneasiness, for it concerns commerce only.'

Still manœuvres were carried on in every form; the British Government returned to the charge under one pretence or another, but in vain, and at the moment when its acting consul-general in Egypt went so far with Mahommed Said as to endeavour to intimidate him by

menaces of a *casus belli*, 1859, the first stroke of the pickaxe was heard.

On April 25 of that year, on the tongue of land which separated the Lake Menzaleh from the Mediterranean Sea, that work was commenced, to commemorate whose termination, all the world having been summoned, gathered together on the 16th November 1869.

I must now tell you how we ran the gauntlet from Ismailia, through what 'feats of arms and deeds' we came to Cairo. It is needless to attempt a description of the Bedlam and Babel which reigned everywhere about us. You will read all about that, and a thousand other things as well, which come within the province of newspaper correspondents, in the English and French journals, they having numerous representatives here, and no doubt from such an unique field of observation as it has proved, rich and racy accounts will appear.

To return to the morning of the 19th, I found M. Guichard, to whom I had been recommended by M. de Lesseps, in his own house not far off, and agreed with him that we would meet at the wharf at half-past nine, where he would put me in the way of reaching Suez by the Canal. Stopping one moment at the post-office to post my last letter, I hurried back to the yacht with all speed, taking the cheering news to my fellow-travellers that we were to be off. No time was lost in transferring our luggage, the distance being nothing—merely from one side of the wharf, or sand-bank, to the other, and about the time appointed M. Guichard made his appearance. The bonhomie of this gentleman was remarkable: beset on all sides by persons of every colour, race, and language, for conveyances, for boats, for steamers, for almost anything that could float from Ismailia to Suez, his equanimity and good nature were not for one moment disturbed. He took us towards a steamer having steam up, and said she was the one by which we were to travel. Passengers were crowding on board, our complement was soon made up, and with a shake of the hand and 'bon voyage,' he left us to look after others. We started from the wharf a little after ten

o'clock, the company on board consisting of the guests of the Viceroy or of M. de Lesseps, and we had also with us His Excellency Nubar Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Selim Pasha, the comptroller, I believe, of the railroads in Egypt.

The weather was of course lovely, the sun just a little hot. A course about south-east for nearly three miles across the Lake Timsah, the channel being staked out as usual, brought us to the northern entrance of the southern section of the Canal, and continuing nearly the same course for four miles further we passed Toussom, then in a more easterly direction Serapeum, and finally a little past noon we emerged into the Bitter Lakes. The depth of water thus far was in some cases thirty feet, and not under twenty-two in that part of the Canal between the two lakes. From the northern shore of the first lake to the southern the distance is thirteen and a half miles, lights or beacons being placed at each extremity four miles and a half from the respective entrances—the course south-east by east.

Lake Timsah and the town of Ismailia have their peculiar features, the former being artificial, of course; but, from the numerous vessels at anchor in it, the constant movement taking place, besides a good portion of it being shut out from an observer at the town, one can scarcely realise what a wonderful sheet of water it is; but on the Bitter Lakes, with no object to distract the attention, one cannot but be struck with their ample dimensions. You see before you in every direction, bounded by the brown sand-hills of the desert, an immense lake of a brilliant emerald green, sparkling in the sun, giving life and animation to what was within a year simply a broad and deep depression in the sand, more than twenty-six feet lower than the waters of the Mediterranean, perfectly dry throughout, and across which men and horses travelled only a few months ago. The Bitter Lakes are divided by a strip of the Canal into northern and southern, the former having an average breadth of between seven and eight miles east and west, the latter of about two and a half miles. As it would only drive you distracted to place before you the number

of mètres of water which these great basins absorbed, I will merely say they were roundly innumerable; and you will be quite as well off. And so across this beautiful inland sea of recent birth we steamed for over three hours, the channel, as heretofore, marked out by tall posts, then through the southern lake, and next in a more southerly direction. At 3.45 P.M. we passed Shalouf, where some very recent work had been done in blasting the bed of the Canal. On both sides walls of rock were seen, the first since leaving Port Said. The shoalest part of the Canal is at this place; at intervals preparations are making for two recesses or stations. As I had noticed along the western bank of the northern section of the Canal between Port Said and Ismailia, so here exists a good road, rarely interrupted, of a breadth of about twelve feet. Still going on for another hour, at length, about half-past four, we were floating on the mild waves of the Red Sea. At five, or a little after, with all our fellow-passengers, we were taken on board of the Messageries Impériales' *Erymanthe*, in the harbour of Suez, which steamer, with the *Alphée*, had been prepared for the reception of the guests of the Khédive.

We found a table laid in the cabin for about an hundred and twenty persons. After a bath, a change of garments, and selection of berths for the night—the whole of the fine accommodations of the ship being placed at our disposal—we sat down to table, a dinner being served of the most *récherché* kind, in the neat and good style for which the French are so renowned, and capital wines of all sorts.

And now while you are digesting the dinner, a word or two of the journey we have made. It is surprising, but nevertheless true, since one has passed from sea to sea, has seen heavy vessels of war and great steamers following each other through in rapid succession, without any accident attributable to the Canal in itself, a sort of wonder comes over one that such a determined opposition should have been steadily pursued against it. How is it that every one could not see from the beginning how much pleasanter, cheaper, and more interesting it would be to

gain the far Eastern world by such a channel as now exists, instead of rolling and tumbling, pitching and tossing for several months on boisterous seas to arrive at the same destination. In no material respect is there danger to ship or cargo. A master of a vessel may look forward to this short run by the Canal, as he would say in an after-dinner speech, as the 'happiest moment of his existence.' What a relief from the care, toil, and responsibility which the additional three months of sea voyage involves! And then the shipowner, what an enormous saving of time and money! Think of the more rapid delivery of freight, of the reduced cost in food and wages, the diminished wear and tear—a man will soon be considered demented who sends his *steamer* to India or China *viâ* the Cape!

How too about the passenger; he can hardly prefer the broiling calms of the Equator, the 'running down of Easting,' an intimate acquaintance with tar and bilge-water, sea-pie and plum *duff*, for three long dreary months, merely that he may say, 'I too have swum in a gondola.' That description of mental alienation which impels people to look personally into 'what the wild waves are saying,' or drives them into raptures about a 'life on the ocean wave,' is abating, and right gladly would many who are now forced to go down to sea in ships, forego acquaintance with the wonders thereof. The weary, weary days of an old-fashioned voyage to the far East; the remembrance of it makes one shudder! What pleasant associations can be summoned up from an occasional sight of an albatross, a boatswain, or a mother cary's chicken, the sole objects which one may see for *months* outside the ship? The perpetually recurring, 'Make it twelve o'clock, sir,' 'strike eight bells,' 'call the watch,' and 'keep her up or away *half a pint*;' and but little fun was there in knowing that 'the fine ship carried a *cow and* a surgeon!'

On the other hand, apart from the shortness of the trip, think of the blue Mediterranean and her classic shores, of the land of the Sphinx—that 'strange land'—and of the peaceful journey through the Canal, where he may see

'How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the bank.'

And so, dinner despatched, we began to ponder over the chances of getting on shore at Suez, our first objective point *en route* for Cairo and Alexandria. We had seen the 'show,' had been gratified beyond measure at the trip so far, and knew that unless we could anticipate the crowd, there would be small chance of accommodation on the way. We, the six, therefore held a council of war, when it was decided that one of the party should immediately land in an Arab boat, secure quarters at the hotel at Suez, if necessary, and with the first of the dawn despatch a conveyance for the remainder and their luggage. Off he accordingly went, a most brilliant moon overhead, the most delicious of atmospheres around and about him, and his pocket full of cheroots; how could mortal man be better off for the one or two hours, we supposed, he would require to get to his destination! But somehow, after he had started, we thought it would make security more sure if we added another string to our bow, so we asked the Commandant of the *Erymanthe* if he could send us on shore in one of the ship's boats at six in the morning, which he very kindly consented to do. As it turned out, our special messenger did not reach Suez until the 'sma' wee hours,' not a boat was to be hired, and had we trusted to his efforts, though well applied they were, not a stone being left unturned, we should have added but another to the many examples of how 'l'homme propose,' and been sadly disappointed. Before we left the *Erymanthe* we were supplied with a most acceptable cup of coffee; some others availed themselves of the ship's boat, and landed with us, and this early move made our fortunes. We bundled our carpet-bags on hummals, mounted the *ever-willing* donkey, and away for Suez at a canter, arriving just a few moments before the first train left for Cairo.

It proved a long day's journey, and how we managed it I cannot tell you; sometimes we went one way and then another, occasionally backing for no apparent reason, then with a desperate rush moving on for half an hour, and coming to a dead halt: it was the most mysterious railway travelling we had ever experienced; the time-tables, which no one consulted, must have been terribly distorted.

We did, however, get to Kafr-Zayat about eleven in the morning, and were there detained two hours, being shunted on a siding in consequence of a telegram having been received ordering all trains to be stopped, until after the Khédive had passed, he having left Suez after us. I need not say that the delay was submitted to with the utmost good humour, nor that we prepared to give 'three cheers and a tiger' as His Excellency passed by. At length on came his carriage, and we made the 'welkin ring,' as far as the limited space in our own permitted; but it appeared that after all we cheered in the wrong place or at the wrong time, and some Pashas and Beys came in for the shouts; it was all one, however, we wanted to cheer some one, any one, and went at it with a will, for great was the hilarity that prevailed. Then we turned off for the Ismailia station, and on arriving there found a multitude of nations waiting in other trains *station*-ary also; all crowded to excess, passengers on the roofs, sitting on the doorsteps, hanging on by the window-frames, the handles of the doors, or astride the buffers! And thus, as we were told by a French gentleman who scrambled into our carriage, they had been waiting for seven tedious hours! What masses of human beings! the ground literally covered with every conceivable un-*nécessaires de voyage*, from every outfitting shop of Europe; even the *stripped* man from Ismailia, with his bathing-tub done up in leather, was there, but now arrayed in proper habiliments, if not in 'purple and fine linen;' tourists and travellers, green goggled and blue-veiled, stretched on heaps of indescribable baggage, or reposing against piles of coal. Native men, women, and children with all their household chattels added to the confusion and the colouring of the scene. On our left a train of numerous waggons filled with a regiment of infantry, another on our right overflowing with Turks, Greeks, and Arabs. Tents were being struck, houses taken down, horses grazing everywhere, a battery of artillery careering wildly about just beyond, while the over-worked railway officials, from the hurly-burly noise and hubbub, from being required to answer fifty questions in fifty different languages every minute, were wandering distractedly

about in a state of absolute imbecility. The fêtes at Ismailia were over; all the world and his wife mustering on this occasion, perhaps twenty-five thousand people were eager to be off to Cairo or wherever else they could get. The Babel of tongues, the rows, the janglings, the rushing this way and that, as frantic men strove for the different carriages, the screaming and other wild bewildering noises, I can't find words to describe; yet in the midst, some Mussulmans at prayers in all sorts of corners, as if a perfect calm prevailed—unmoved, immovable.

We had seen many steamers passing down towards the Red Sea as we were coming from Suez in the morning, the railway running at times close to the Canal, and we could distinguish the masts of several still at anchor in the Lake Timsah, in front of the town of Ismailia. Presently some one exclaimed, 'The *Delta*!' and sure enough there she was, with the well-known signal at the main riding boldly amongst them. She had arrived the 'day after the fair,' it is true, but quite safely, and this point proved the termination of her trip through the Suez Canal; she left Marseille to be present at the inaugural fêtes, but came in just as the last firework flickered out. It recalled to mind the Italian proverb which used to be jocosely applied to that favourite line at Hongkong, 'Qui va P-an-O va sano.'

The day was drawing to a close, and yet we had a good bit of ground to get over before we could reach Cairo, and unmistakable hints of a want of the morning meal were intimated. We had congratulated ourselves that we should have arrived at Zagazig for that important event at a reasonable hour, but made merry over the name, and the most facetious of our party ventured to remark that, late as it was, nearly 5 P.M., even a breakfast 'en Zigzag' would not be unacceptable. This curious feat was, however, denied us, and we arrived only at night, to hear with some amount of horror that we were to change trains without delay! Then came the tug of war, and Greek met Greek indeed. We had no sooner seized some loaves of bread at the *gare*, and swallowed some tiny cups of coffee of the consistency of honey, than we heard the conductors cry out 'Suez

—Chibn-el-kom—Cairo—Massourah;' the bells rung; the whistles whistled, and every one of the thousands present rushed about in a state of frenzy to secure his place; but whether he got on the right train or the wrong one was entirely in the hands of Providence. One conductor, on being asked, when we had seated ourselves by hard work in a carriage, whether we were all right, replied, 'Yes; all right for Suez.' Out we bundled, and pushed our way into another, and were told by a second bewildered official that we were all right for Chibn-el-kom!—just the opposite direction to that in which we wanted to go. Once more we jumped out, with bags and umbrellas, and by main force worked through the noisy crowd; on the one side Sallie Mahommed, with the voice of a stentor, crying out for Bedridden Khan; on the other, loud shouts for Antonio and Emmanuelo! It was confusion thrice confounded. Demetrius couldn't find Colocotroni; even the ubiquitous Smith was loudly sought for; the very air was rent with cries for Brown; while several lively Frenchmen were seeking in voices of thunder the whereabouts of Petitjean and Grosbois!

Two conductors, in a state of mental prostration, were standing near some carriages; we asked one where they were going, and he replied 'Cairo.' We sprang towards them; but to make assurance doubly sure, we asked the other, and he said 'Suez'! When I tell you that Zagazig is a sort of Clapham Junction, you may imagine, under the circumstances of a meeting of several trains filled with such an unheard-of throng of people of every tongue and country, the complete maze that existed; but there was no time to be lost, and little for ceremony; so we pitched our traps on to the heads of those who had preceded us in the next carriage we came to, and squeezed in ourselves, trusting to the same good luck that had heretofore attended our movements to bring us out in the end. Nor did fortune desert us—we found ourselves 'all right' at last. The train started, stopped, then plunged wildly forward; and finally, towards one in the morning, we ran into the station at Cairo

On descending to the platform, two Egyptian officers, 'en frac et décorations,' stepped up to us and inquired if we had any preference of hotel. We replied that we had not; when, summoning a dragoman who stood by cut and dried, they directed him to accompany us to our present quarters—the best hotel in the city. Carriages were at once provided, and we were driven off. No sooner were we installed in the two most comfortable rooms that the house afforded, than a bountiful supper was provided, to which, in the words of the aforesaid penny-a-liner, we 'did ample justice,' and by two in the morning were in a state of thorough obliviousness.

Cairo, November 22.

Don't imagine for a single moment that I intend to bore you with a description of Cairo, its mosques, bazaars, or its heterogeneous multitude of inhabitants. Guide-books are as plentiful as blackberries, and may be consulted on those subjects; besides, as you have been over the ground, you would find my attempt to reproduce these familiar sights lacking in interest and spice. For the same reason I did not venture to inflict upon you the oft-told tale of Suez, of the pipes, the fezzes, the flowing robes partially concealing swarthy skins, the sentimental donkey, and the illusory wonders of sherbet. The Turkish bath has been treated *ad nauseam*; and as to the everlasting 'fellah,' naturalists and philosophers, travellers and members of humane societies, have exhausted the subject. But there is one thing to which I would call the attention of any visitor to Cairo—the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, collected and arranged by Marietta Bey, at Bulac. It contains most interesting specimens of gold jewellery of Pharaonic times, and a wonderful list of objects in the most perfect condition and of the same period, recently discovered in a hitherto unopened tomb of great dimensions. And with this exordium, now to business.

The morning after our arrival I was up betimes, refreshed to a degree. My room-mates had wandered forth for a stroll. The window was open and let in a most delicious balmy air. I am sorry I can't send you a muster of it.

In a state of supreme satisfaction and contentment, the result of sound rest and good refreshment, with a sense of a few days' relief from hurry-scurry, I walked up and down the room enjoying the odd view from the windows across the Esbekieh, and so even to the distant pyramids. I rubbed my hands with intense pleasure and clapped them together, when suddenly my reveries were interrupted by the unexpected entrance of several turbaned men, gorgeously arrayed in embroidery and red slippers, who, prostrating themselves with their hands at their heads, in the most approved form of salaam, called me Effendi, and meekly asked how they could sacrifice themselves for me. The clapping of the hands instantly occurred to me, and so did something else—(Ah! ah! thought I to myself; good). 'Bring my boots, *café au lait*, and a roll.'

It has turned out a most fortunate thing for us that we pushed on from Suez as we did. People have been arriving in crowds the live-long day, and our hotel is full to overflow, so is every other as we hear; and it is really becoming a question to many a one, where shall I lay my head, bite and sup. We sit at dinner with fully an hundred and fifty, and yet everything is well served; every luxury in and out of season, as the phrase goes, is placed before us. The wines are capital, and a joyousness and lively spirit prevail along the board. We listen to stories of experiences which, could they be booked, would afford a fund of amusement. Even the traveller, with his bath-tub, has his joke, and every one is hilarious and genial. Not a few praises are bestowed on the Khédive and M. de Lesseps for the boundless hospitality, the provident care, with which all the guests are indiscriminately treated. May their shadows never be less!

The morning after our arrival, a carriage was placed at our disposal, and at a fitting hour we went down to take a drive through the bazaars. A kawass, brilliantly-attired, with the well-known large-knobbed staff, met us at the foot of the stairs, and in wonderful state and importance led us to the door of the hotel, where the conveyance was waiting, cautioning the Arabs standing about not to come

too near us; that we were great sheiks, and to mind not to bother us for baksheesh. He mounted the box with the coachman. A syce ran on in front of the horses, who, as we drove over many a toe—for the streets were densely crowded—kept shouting out in a loud voice to clear the road, for were we not Lords of the Universe, the Fathers and Mothers of the people? The consequence was that we had the satisfaction to pay three pounds for a burnous, which we afterwards learnt would have been dear at ten shillings, and half-a-sovereign for slippers, the like of which were offered to us the next day at the hotel for two-and-sixpence. Dignity, however, costs money anywhere, especially when thrust upon one. We visited the mosque, the citadel, the spot made famous by the memorable leap; and how we got through the tortuous streets and back to the hotel must rank amongst enigmas as insolvable as that of the Sphinx.

In the evening we had the honour of attending a ball, given by the Viceroy at his palace on the Nile, two or three miles distant. The road was lighted up with gas or cressets the entire way. There were fewer present than at the ball at Ismailia; perhaps not over 1,500. The Emperor of Austria, with many distinguished diplomats, and others of celebrity were there. I left some time before supper, but heard that the festivities were kept up until after three in the morning. As there is a steamer to be despatched from Alexandria for Marseille on the 24th, I close and post this in order to visit the Pyramids with a clear conscience.

Cairo, November 23.

It is astounding what theories men of genius can build up. Perhaps none of a more extraordinary nature have ever been submitted to the consideration of thinking men than those which have recently appeared as to 'the purpose, object, and aim' of the *great* pyramid. Until these theories are controverted or supplanted by others, as they are certain to be, their novelty will afford a fund of both serious reflection and lively amusement.

The pyramid of Cheops according to Professor Piazzi

Smyth, was a work of Divine inspiration, for the purpose of handing down to posterity the exact measure of the modern British inch. According to 'A Clergyman,' the anonymous author of the 'Pyramid and the Bible,' while agreeing with the learned professor as to the sacred origin of the work, he considers it to have been built 'for a sign and a witness unto the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt,' which of course amounts to the same thing. But the latter gentleman goes further, and asks whether the 'anterior or pyramid revelation may not be made to influence and supersede the Papal and Protestant ritualism of our day in favour of moral and social, of political and ecclesiastical rectifications.'

This question may be safely left to Archbishop Manning and Doctor Cumming.

So now there is an end to all that delightful charm of mystery as to the why and the wherefore, with which travellers were wont to climb this vast structure, whose summit is bathed in mid-day splendour, or to penetrate into the King's chamber, where the darkness of Erebus reigns. It is tantalising to think that its whole history is now as plain as A. B. C. The other pyramids, which stand close by, as well as those of Memphis and Dashour, must have 'purposes, objects, and aims' as well; how I wish these clever gentlemen would let us know what they are.

We found travellers around and about 'Cheops' as thick as bees, and knowing from experience what we had to encounter in examining it inside and out, we first discussed an ample tiffin that had been supplied by the keeper of the hotel at Cairo. I don't think I ascended the gigantic structure quite as nimbly as when we visited it some years ago. The entrance, abut 4½ feet square, was, however, a matter of difficulty from its narrowness, being actually blocked up with sightseers and their guides squeezing in or squeezing out, many returning after penetrating but a short distance, terrified at the chance of suffocation, the ceaseless and importunate clamour of the Arabs for backsheesh—at the dust, the confined space

leading through Cimmerian darkness they knew not where! By dint of much struggling we managed to force our way along the tunnel, but the closeness of the atmosphere and the chances of ever getting anywhere, caused one of our party to cry peccavi, and so he, making a sort of superhuman effort, turned and forced his way back to the open air. At the foot of the *inner* ascent, we found an Italian gentleman who had just fainted; his Arab guides were about him, and through their care he subsequently got safely out, not venturing further in. There was nothing for us but to go on—it was equally as dangerous to return as to advance. Our Arabs, who were a splendid lot, cheered us on, up along the ramp, cautioning us at the summit to look out for our heads—'Got damn stone here, Effendi;' of which we became conscious by some sound bumps: and finally stooping low and crawling on some paces, we entered the King's Chamber.

Read Professor C. Piazzi Smyth's interesting description of this granite-cased chamber, and of its lidless Sarcophagus, the emblem of our present 'bushel basket,' and which, according to the heretofore quoted 'Clergyman,' is with its surroundings, 'a revelation suited most perfectly to the *commercial* and social arrangements of mankind in these present and the approaching days—and based on evidence from the exact sciences—which will turn attention from hurtful ritualism and sacerdotalism towards the rectification of practical evils in society, and to the adjustment of physical *forces* under intellectual and moral forces.'

Don't start off now and begin to talk about March hares or anything of that sort, or you will then be like 'some boasters of science who will probably treat the *scientific* evidence of a revelation as little children treated miracles in the market-place.'

But the excitement, the din, the horrid night that the flame of a couple of tallow candles scarcely dispelled, with a sense of being in the centre of this awful building, far from the light of day, and a dim uncertainty as to the getting out again, had their effect upon another of our

companions, who was seized with vertigo, and gave immediate practical illustration of the correctness of the above theories, by *measuring his length* on the floor! We remained in the chamber just long enough to witness the effect produced by some magnesium lights which we had brought with us, when we beat a retreat, the Arabs moving carefully with the *overcome* party, the sole example perhaps of any one who has yet fairly put the Professor's mathematics to the test. In a few minutes we were once more, to our intense satisfaction, in open daylight. After a look at the Sphinx,

> 'This most chimerical and wondrous thing,
> 'From whose dumb mouth not even the gods could wring
> 'Truth nor Antithesis.'

we returned to Cairo and finished the day merrily at a Turkish bath.

Alexandria, November 25.

Last night we arranged accounts with our clever Dragoman, Mohammed Hassan, who had been of invaluable service to us during the four days we passed at Cairo, and left for Alexandria by the morning train about eight o'clock, arriving at 1 P.M. We had still taken time by the forelock, and having sent a telegram to announce our coming, the consequence was that we found the hotel fully prepared for guests, but few arrived; and we were comfortably installed. The next thing was to secure berths in a steamer for Europe, which required much routine. I had been anxious to go by Brindisi and Mont Cenis, but the only packet which was to leave for the next ten days was full, and we have now taken passage in the Messageries Impériales' *Guienne* to leave on the 27th for Marseille.

The material improvements that have taken place in Cairo during the last eighteen years are inconceivable. One is surprised at the number of official and private buildings which would do credit to any European city. Gas is everywhere. The Esbekieh, which we recollect as a great waste, the common receptacle for dead dogs and cats, is now neatly laid out, divided into squares, under proper police regulations, and rapidly becoming a useful

ornament to the city. The foreign shops are supplied with every conceivable thing. The hotels are numerous and very comfortable, by all accounts; the safety to person and property night or day something remarkable, and speaks well for the municipal arrangements.

Alexandria teems with life, bustle, and activity, and has become a great centre of commerce, managed by Europeans, or the descendants of Europeans—Greek, Italian, and French principally, with a few English. It is, however, very much in want of two things. French influence of course predominates, as it does at Cairo, and throughout the land. Political and diplomatic rivalry have just resulted in this, that they have placed France in Egypt at the front. At the hotels, post-offices, railway offices, and stations, the French language is universal, and is spoken more or less fluently by the Arab boatman who plies in the harbour, and by the coachman who is hired in the streets.

November 26.

The same scenes as at Ismailia and Cairo, streets filled with drays, waggons, and every conceivable kind of wheeled vehicle loaded with luggage, surrounded by wearied owners scarcely knowing where to go for shelter, and bringing home to us the fact that had we not been on the alert, we too might now be wandering houseless about the town, instead of being in excellent quarters. We can look with supreme indifference on the lively demonstrations of helplessness of our brother tourists, some of whom decidedly do not bear their state with equanimity.

We ourselves have at length arrived at the end of our sojourn, and are to go on board the *Guienne* after dinner this evening, ready for a start in the morning. I would not have lost this trip to Egypt for a great deal; nothing can surpass it in interest, and no doubt the event just celebrated will rank as amongst the great historic spectacles of the age. That the Suez Canal is a success, as a short and safe transit from one sea to the other for the commerce of nations, the most sceptical heretofore must now acknowledge, and it is to be hoped that those who

contributed their money to the enterprise may be rewarded.

I now go to post this, and my next will be forwarded from Messina. *Vale!*

On board of the *Guienne*, November 30.

We left Alexandria on the 27th, and are making very fair progress, expecting to be at Messina to-morrow. The *Guienne* is everything that can be desired as a passenger ship. She belongs to the Brazil and Bordeaux line, and while withdrawn for repairs, &c., has been on this extra trip to Port Said. She has accommodations for 260 passengers; the table is very good, which I consider an important feature at sea, and we find it here a judicious mixture of French and Italian; the cuddy servants are civil and attentive. The system of ventilation throughout, the cabins particularly, is acknowledged by those on board, who have been much at sea, as the most perfect of its kind, and might be studied with advantage by any other steam-ship company trading with hot climates. I never saw anything so complete in this respect. There is a spacious dining-saloon on the spar deck, the lower one being occupied fore and aft by the sleeping apartments. The number of passengers is small, only sixty-four, of whom three are ladies, one French, one Spanish, and one Greek. It is a thing of probably rare occurrence, but I mention it as an illustration of the divers nations of which we are composed, that one evening while engaged at a game of whist, a conversation was being carried on by seven gentlemen on the subject of the Canal and our visit to it, one of whom was a Russian, the others a Frenchman, an Englishman, an American, a Spaniard, a Dane, and a Greek. With few exceptions all are returning from the fêtes—one, the Dane, was a member of the Commercial Congress held at Cairo, presided over by H. E. Nubar Pasha, and the result of whose deliberations will no doubt be given to the world. The exceptions are two bishops and two other ecclesiastics, who arrived at Suez by the last Australian steamer, and leave us at Messina, to be present at the Œcumenical Council at Rome. One of

them has been absent from Europe and his native country, —Ireland—for thirty-six years.

You will have noticed in one of my letters that I made special exception of one nation not officially represented at the fêtes of the inauguration. It was a source of great regret to all Americans that the United States was the sole Western nation not present in this capacity. The Khédive had invited General Grant to send some one on behalf of the country, but through some accident no one appeared. Neither Chamber of Commerce nor any other corporate body, with the single exception of the Boston Board of Trade, sent any delegate whatever. The press had of course enterprise enough to despatch several correspondents, both from New York and Boston, some of whom we met at Cairo.

Throughout all the Canal, at the various fêtes, whether at Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, or Cairo, not a 'star and stripe' was seen. Every American was surprised that of the squadron in the Mediterranean, not a vessel appeared at Port Said to do honour to the occasion, or to testify national sympathy with the Viceroy in the initiation of an enterprise destined to do so much good to mankind in facilitating intercourse, rounding off prejudices, and accelerating trade, in all which the United States profess so deep an interest. It is well known, too, that it was not for the want of a suitable vessel to pass through the Canal, for not one could be more so than the sloop *Richmond*, which was lying idle just at this time at Marseille, or close by, and no finer ship was present of any nation.

The whole number of *strangers* or *visitors* in Egypt, called together by the inauguration, has been variously estimated, but it is not easy to arrive at anything reliable. It would not perhaps be far out of the way to say ten or twelve thousand, of whom there were comparatively few English, and a very small number of Americans. It might be supposed from the extensive commerce under their control, that they would be the most curious and interested in judging for themselves as to the practicability of this new road for business purposes, yet I doubt if there were

over three hundred of the former or thirty of the latter. The visitors consisted principally of French—as might be supposed—Italians and Greeks; of Dutch there was quite a large number, and many from the various parts of Germany, north and south. Austria proper was strongly represented, so was Trieste; while Belgium and Switzerland contributed their quota, and Denmark, Sweden, and Norway theirs. The Spanish language was frequently heard, and we have several of that nation on board the *Guienne*. My right-hand man at the *table-d'hôte* of the hotel at Alexandria was the Consul for the Argentine Republic at Trieste. Of Russians there were many.

London: December 24.

As you will perceive, I have gone over a fair quantity of land and water since the note I despatched from Marseille. We arrived there on an excessively cold morning, the 5th inst., and had a truly Siberian night on the railway between that city and Paris, arriving there the next morning at eight o'clock, and there we separated; the party of six, who had gone together from Marseille in the *Godavery* a month before, one only proving recreant, and he left us at Messina on our return. The crossing of the Channel from Calais to Dover was ten thousand times worse than even the bad weather we experienced between Bonifacio and Marseille, the steamer, half buried in the waves, shipping heavy seas 'over all,' fore and aft, and the cabin filled with dreadfully sick passengers in an atmosphere of poison. Why it is that the English people submit year after year to the misery of these mail packets is a mystery to every one; and then the disgusting arrangements of the 'white basin,' to say nothing of the fact, as many have told me, and of which I have no doubt, that serious if not fatal illness is often contracted by the exposure incident to these Channel trips. Those of us who remained on deck during the two and a half hours of transit were literally drenched; and on getting into the train at Dover, the weather bitterly cold, without time or place for a change of garments, not a foot-warmer to be seen! Presently a fellow came to the carriage window

and exclaimed, 'Foot-warmer, sir!' which turned out, however, not in the interest of the passengers, but a despicable mode of begging for a shilling. It is a disgrace to the railway company, in the first place, that such a thing should be allowed, and in the second place, that foot-warmers are not common to all carriages on this line.

I was told by a friend in London, that if he wanted to go where he would never be found, where he might pull the bell without any chance of its being answered, it would be to a London 'Hotel Company, *Limited*,' as the name is but a reflex perhaps of the reality. I have lodged at one, but I'll not say if my experience agrees with his, though I should counsel any traveller who was seeking comfort, cleanliness, and civility, to look before he leaps. It is not *every* hotel in London where the bedroom carpets are filthy to a degree, the window-curtains and shades disgustingly dirty, blankets musty and fusty.

The large room in which I breakfast is ornamented and decorated in the richest style of art, the colours of the walls and ceilings so singularly appropriate to the clear skies and transparent atmosphere with which this wonderful city is blessed! They are a compound of *dark browns* and *greens*, to which must be added some coats of smoke and dirt, offering a broad contrast to the murky, melancholy appearance of similar rooms in Paris or on the Continent generally, in which who can enter without his spirits sinking to zero? A quiet air reigns throughout, which is congenial; for instance, to an overworked brain, it produces too a feeling of contentment favourable to digestion, and this is a type of its *habitués*.

An oldish gentleman enters: he is shaved to an 'Affigraphy' (don't ask me to explain this word: I once heard it applied by a sailor, during one of those long sea voyages, on a Sunday morning to the skipper when he made his appearance on deck radiant in a smooth face, hirsute appendages being very rare in those days), and he, the oldish gentleman, is a picture of clean solid respectability, not less than 5,000*l.* a year. His shirt

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collar is stiffened to the utmost tension of which Patent Glenfield is capable; his coat and continuations brushed to a fault, and his double-soled highlows shine like mirrors. After placing his hat, not a hair of which is ruffled, with a scrupulous care on a hook hard by, he approaches a large table in the middle of the room, on which are displayed haunches of cold beef and mutton, chickens and ham. Presently his attention is attracted by some one particular dish: he examines it minutely through an eyeglass, and walks around it while doing so, as a North-American Indian dances around the victim he is about to demolish. He stops and points at it, and like the Indian, in a gruffish sort of a grunt exclaims, 'Waugh!' No other sound is heard, until, as a servant in attendance carves it for him; he walks solemnly to a seat, saying in a sepulchral voice similar to that of the tent scene, 'Not too thin.'

And this is how I got to Suez, and how I got back. All the salient points and surroundings of the journey have been set forth *ab ovo ad mala*; and if you have derived more amusement from my letters than solid instruction, you must overlook that deficiency in consideration of the bewildering scenes through which I have passed, and have here only attempted to sketch.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE NAVIGATION OF THE SUEZ CANAL.

In a commercial point of view, I see no reason why steamers should not make use of this new route, but many why they should, and although it might be a slow and tedious navigation *up* the Red Sea for sailing vessels, if unassisted by tugs, there seems no obstacle to their going *down*, and then returning to Europe *viâ* the Cape—the saving in time and expense would still be great. Experience teaches that one circumstance adapts itself to another, and so, in this case of the Suez Canal, steam-vessels will undoubtedly be built suitable to it, and displace vessels with sails for the eastern trade, as we find they are gradually doing in all parts of the world,—witness the coast of China, the ports of Bombay and Calcutta, with those of China on the one hand and Suez on the other; California with Japan and China. Look at the Mediterranean: scarce a day passes that one cannot see the smoke of steamers, carrying cargo and passengers to numerous ports and places, which a few years since could only be reached under canvas; and it is scarce worth while to refer to those splendid screws and paddle-wheels which run almost daily between Europe and the coast of America, north and south.

All this may be safely left to the enterprise of the merchant, but I have no doubt that in a short time the last trading voyage under steam will have been performed to India, China, and Japan *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope. And even as regards sailing vessels, it is after all not so difficult nor intricate a navigation from Europe by the Red Sea to the Far East. The Sea is surveyed throughout and good charts of it exist in abundance, but at the same time pilots should be appointed for it as well as for the Canal. With any other anxieties the captain of

a ship may feel, none need be apprehended from heavy gales, nor from fogs to interfere with his reckoning. The hazy nature of the atmosphere he must be alive to; but, in fact, the only serious consideration will be his draught of water, and if I am not very much mistaken, anchorage may be found along the route. But in order to render the Canal perfectly available *both ways* for vessels without auxiliary power, a system of powerful tugs, plainly but strongly built, might be established to work between Perim and Suez. From the proximity of coal-producing countries, the cost of fuel would be moderate, and thereby also the expense of towing; and as a feât, whether from intricacy of navigation, velocity of tide, or exposure to shifting channels, incomparably below the task of similar performances on the Yangtsze, where deeply laden and valuable tea ships have been repeatedly towed from Hankow to Shanghai, while in distance it is not far from the same. In the days of the East India Company, their vessels, with canvas only, although of less draught of water than the average of merchant ships of these days, frequently visited the Red Sea; and from time immemorial sailing craft of all sizes have been trading between the Persian Gulf, Bombay, Mocha, and Jedda. This feature, however, of towage need not be insisted upon, yet I cannot but think that if some enterprising company would *at once* undertake it, and place the boats there, that sailing vessels would quickly avail themselves of their aid. It is not by any means to be supposed that all sailing vessels in the China or Japan trade are tea clippers, or come anywhere near the passages they make of from 90 to 100 days, or thereabout. On the contrary, I should say, after a long residence in the former country, that either to or from Europe the average is fully four months in the south-west monsoon and four and a half, if not five, in the north-east. As far as insurance is concerned, the premium on steamers, and, with the above conditions, on sailing vessels as well, ought to be lower than by the long sea voyage to the East.

The Red Sea appears to be the great bugbear, but with a good ship, the intelligence of shipmasters of the present day, and a disciplined crew, added to the services of a

pilot, my opinion is, that underwriters would have fewer claims to pay than on the long sea voyage. Once clear of the Red Sea, vessels under canvas have for six months of the year a fair wind in the south-west monsoon to any of the Eastern ports, the whole way to Japan, and the north-east monsoon in their favour for returning.

There will, no doubt, be published in due time a full tariff of charges to be levied on ships and passengers availing themselves of the facilities of the canal; particulars also respecting pilotage, towing, anchoring, and speed at which vessels may travel while in it. The latter is now fixed at $6\frac{1}{4}$ miles per hour, equal to 10 kilometres; and compared with the former the expenses on freight from Alexandria to Suez by railway are $112\frac{1}{2}$ francs by express, and 25 francs by ordinary train per ton.

M. de Lesseps estimates the total amount of tonnage employed annually in the commerce of the East and West at 12,000,000 tons, of which one-half may pass through the canal, yielding a gross revenue of 60,000,000 francs. In this estimate a certain number of passengers are included, on each one of whom the charge is equivalent to one ton of measurement.

M. Henri Silvestre in his book on the Canal, p. 247, says—'The navigation of the Red Sea is as easy for sailing vessels as the Mediterranean or the Adriatic, and much more so than that of the Gulf of Lyons, the Baltic, or the Channel. Lieutenant Waghorn proved by numerous trials made between 1827 and 1835 that communication could be carried on by that route between Bombay and England, under canvas, without the aid of steam. The seventy-four voyages made by Captain Harris, member of the International Commission, places beyond all discussion the possibility of navigating the Red Sea; and, finally the English Captain Methven, who has made many voyages on it, lately remarked to M. de Lesseps, that this sea, with its breadth, its alternating winds, and its regular breezes, with its fine nights and the absence of storms, in its length of five hundred leagues, and its general configuration of coast of twelve hundred leagues, may offer a safe navigation for sailing vessels.'

Of the Canal itself, the risk is quite inappreciable, if only the *channel is followed*, and this is a most simple thing to do. No one need give himself the least uneasiness as to its becoming shallow from 'drifting sands,' nor from the influence of strong winds on yards, masts, and rigging, from which, at the worst, no more danger need be apprehended than when lying alongside of a wharf under similar circumstances. High banks border the Canal on either side, with only occasional interruptions throughout its whole length; these act as barriers to any moving sands, and to a great extent from the force of any wind which might be expected in that proverbially quiet atmosphere. The passage through the Canal to and fro by so many steamers from the 17th to the 21st November, affords some indication of the effect of paddle-wheels on the banks, and really one saw no danger to apprehend on that score. It is indeed curious to see how thoroughly the projector and the engineers of the work have anticipated every danger and guarded against every difficulty.

The dimensions of the Canal are as follows:—

Length from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, 105 miles.

Depth in *mid-channel* or *channel proper*, from 20 to 26 ft.

Breadth on the floor of the *channel proper*, 72 feet, widening gradually at an angle of two feet in one to 150 feet, and then at an angle of three feet in one to 246 feet at the surface, through those parts where deep cuttings have been made, say to the north and south of the lakes, finally attaining a width of 1,000 feet, with a depth of 26½ feet just before its exit into the Red Sea.*

Attention must be fixed upon the fact, that the *channel proper* is alluded to as to be kept by ships passing through, and the references to *vessels* apply to those of ordinary draught, say up to 18 feet, but in a short time, perhaps before the middle of February 1870, the Canal will be available for a draught of 23 feet throughout.

As at Port Said, jetties and breakwaters have been constructed on the Suez side to protect the anchorage at its mouth.

* See Section of the Canal, East and West, on the Map.

ORGANISATION OF THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY.

THE organisation of the Suez Canal Company was through a concession granted by H. E. Mohammed Said Pasha to M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, dated the 30th November, 1854, 'for the purpose of constituting La Compagnie Universelle du Canal de Suez,' which should have for its object the piercing of the Isthmus and creating a suitable channel for navigation by large sea-going vessels; the constructing of two sufficient entrances, one on the Mediterranean, the other on the Red Sea, and the establishing of one or two harbours. Also for the making of a fresh water canal, suitable for the river boats of the Nile, and which should connect that river with the main canal, and have two branches, one to convey its waters to Suez the other to Pelusium.

In the first instance, the Egyptian Government surrendered to the Company, free of all taxation and rent whatever, all land, not belonging to private owners, which might be necessary, as well as all yet uncultivated lands, not specially owned, which might be brought to a state of fertility or put under cultivation through the operations of the Company and at its expense, with this reservation, that of the latter land it should be exempt from taxation for a period of ten years only, after which time its use and occupation to be reserved for the Company on paying the usual taxes. Some modifications were, however, afterwards made and embodied in a convention dated on the 22nd February, 1866, whereby, in consideration of the Company resuming the lands surrendered unconditionally to them by the Acts of Convention of 1854 (and 1856), with the exception of 3,000 hectares absolutely required for the works of the canal, an indemnity should be paid to them of 30,000,000 francs, with some other charges made

in respect to the 'cultivable' land to be created from the benefits of the fresh water canal, the employment of certain labour, &c., the indemnity was raised to 84,000,000 of francs.

The Canal to be perpetually neutral to all merchant vessels going from one sea to the other, without any distinction, exclusion, or preference of person or nation.

The duration of the Company was fixed at ninety-nine years, dating from the opening of the Canal to ship navigation, at the end of which time it was to revert to the Egyptian Government, the latter taking over at a valuation all material, &c. &c., the Company, however, to have the privilegé of renewing the concession, or grant, for successive periods of ninety-nine years, on paying 20 per cent. of the net profits to the Egyptian Government on the first renewal, 25 per cent. on the second, and 30 per cent. on the third; but this increase never to surpass 30 per cent.

The Company to have full power to establish its own tariff of charges, to be levied on all vessels alike without distinction or favour, but which should never exceed 10 francs 'per tonneau de capacité'—of ship's capacity—and the same for each passenger.

To the Egyptian Government was to be paid, in consideration of the concession and other advantages, 15 per cent. of the net annual receipts. A provision is then made of 10 per cent. of the net annual receipts to the several promoters of the scheme or to their heirs. The chief promoter, M. de Lesseps, to enjoy the privilege of presiding over and directing the Company for the term of ten years from the period at which the concession for ninety-nine years commences.

The Company to be a Joint-Stock Company, Limited, with a capital of 200,000,000 of francs, divided into 400,000 shares of 500 francs each.

Thirty per cent. on each share to be paid in cash, which, with any other calls, to be credited with 5 per cent. interest per annum during the progress of the works, and payable on the 1st of July and 1st January.

The net profits of the Company to be divided as follows:—Provision having first been made for the keeping

of the Canal in order, and for a reserve fund of 5 per cent.

To the Egyptian Government	15 per cent.	
„ Promoters	10 „	
„ 'Conseil'	3 „	
A fund for aid and relief, as well as gratifications or indemnity to the Employées	2 „	
Shareholders	70 „	=100

Dividends payable on the 1st of July, or as may be decided by the Administration, or on account the 1st January of each year.

LONDON: *December* 25, 1869.

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